

Children, Youth & Family Consortium

CYFC Monthly

CYFC Monthly — May 2015

Peppers! Cilantro! Potatoes! Oh My!

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Despite a rainy, chilly evening, and initial uncertainty from early arrivals, it didn't take long for an electric buzz to fill the Bruce Vento Elementary School cafeteria in East St. Paul on Thursday evening, May 14. More than 200 people, including parents,, children, community members, and school teachers and staff gathered to share great food, abundant conversation, and opinions about what should grow in the school's community garden this summer. We, along with other educators and staff with CYFC, were among those who attended the May 14 event as part of our community-engagement partnership with the school.

One presenter was Marnita Shroedl of [Marnita's Table](#), a Minneapolis-based social service organization that seeks to open up [lines of communication](#) between diverse groups of people — using food and drink to spark conversations. “How many of you want to plant this vegetable in your school garden?” Shroedl asked, while holding up bright red and yellow bell peppers

Many hands shot into the air, eager to vote for the fruits, vegetables, and herbs they wanted to see planted in the school garden. The event also featured a taco bar and Thai food provided by local Saint Paul restaurants. Students from nearby Washington Technology Magnet School bustled back and forth serving as kitchen assistants, clean up crews, and beverage station attendants. Translators were also on hand to help non-English-speaking Karen, Hmong, and Latino attendees understand the presentations and communicate with other attendees

In short, everyone was welcome at the table to share, eat and enjoy the company of a wide range of people in their community. This was in keeping with the vision of Marnita's Table: “Through intent, we cut across traditional boundaries of ethnic, cultural, religious, or sexual identity, as well as educational or socio-economic status, and find common ground — always while breaking bread.”

In addition to building new relationships across boundaries, the May 14 event also sought to recruit volunteers to help care for the school garden over the summer months when school is not in session. With over 30 parent, staff, and neighborhood volunteers willing to share their gifts and time, the garden is poised to be well cared for and serve as bountiful space for health and wellness all summer long.

In addition, many attendees said they felt welcome and enjoyed the good food. One person said, “I enjoyed the whole experience and everyone was so welcoming to our family. The food was awesome, and I think that growing a garden for the community will be a good learning experience for all.”

The energy, passion and excitement shown at the May 14 event at the Bruce Vento School is a hallmark of community-engagement work, and we at CYFC are honored to be part of it. As the Marnita's Table vision

says further, “by conscious process, we create enduring relationships.”

Seeds of those enduring relationships were planted on May 14. And we’re excited to see how they grow over the summer and many seasons to come.

If you want to learn more about the great work CYFC is doing with Bruce Vento Elementary School and how you can get involved, check out our project [website](#). Also, follow us on Facebook ([UofMNCYFC](#)) and Twitter ([@CYFCumn](#)), and subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel.

Consortium News

Save the date for the next Lessons from the Field!

Join us for Children in Common: Ensuring the emotional well being of children when parenting apart October 22, 2015. Our speakers will be Kathryn Edin, Ph.D. and James McHale, Ph.D. and panelists Judge Bruce Peterson, John Jackson and Rose McCollough will be furthering the discussion. Participants will:

- Increase their understanding about the complexities of coparenting when parents live apart
- Apply innovative practices in their work with children, youth, and parents when parents live apart
- Individually reflect on practice approaches to ensure they convey respect for the assets and strengths of children, youth and parents.
- Differentiate between the challenges of single parenting with one or more partners and parenting following divorce
- Analyze the effectiveness of current interventions
- Compare research, practices, and policies related to parenting with child’s other parent

Check out CYFC's New Video Page

Take a look at the newly designed and updated CYFC “[Videos](#)” web page. Explore educational videos bridging research and practice in children, youth and family issues, and learn about promising practices for promoting health in children and families. You will find videos of past Lessons from the Field events and the Wonder Years Science Museum exhibit, as well as learn about historical trauma and cultural healing. Want even more? Subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel.

Recent Conference Addressed 'Creating Trauma-Sensitive Practices, Organizations and Communities'

On April 28, CYFC sponsored the sixth annual Research to Practice Training Series as part of the Minnesota Association for Children’s Mental Health annual conference. This year’s event, titled “Creating Trauma-Sensitive Practices, Organizations and Communities” was co-sponsored by three other University of Minnesota units: The Center for Leadership Education in Maternal and Child Public Health, the Center for Early Education and Development, and the Ambit Network. The presenter, facilitator team brought together over 75 professionals from around Minnesota to spend the day sharing best practices and exploring topics related to self care, healing through relationships, and building healthy partnerships. Connect with participants and find event-related presentation materials on CYFC’s new Trauma Sensitive Community website [here](#).

University & Community Announcements

Webinar to Examine Credit Issues During a Family Transition

Sponsor: Extension Center for Family Development Parents Forever™ administrative team

Date: May 28, 2015

Cost: Free

Location: Online

Sharon Powell and Jennifer Garbow, University of Minnesota Extension educators, will provide an overview about potential credit issues in this short webinar. They will discuss the implications of overusing credit, examine how families can explore division of debt, and outline how family finances evolve before, during, and after a family transition such as divorce. Register [here](#).

May Is Mental Health Awareness Month!

Governor Mark Dayton has declared May [Mental Health Month](#). Get involved by participating in the [Make It OK](#) campaign, and accessing resources on the National Alliance on Mental Illness Minnesota [website](#) or on the Minneapolis Public Schools [website](#).

Brown Bag Lunch to Explore Engaging Schools to Get Outdoors

Sponsor: Minnesota Children & Nature Connection

The next event in the Minnesota Children & Nature Connection Brown Bag Lunch Seminar Series will feature Poppy Potter, director of Operations with the [Voyageur Outward Bound School](#). Poppy will share key elements in forming partnerships with schools and how to incorporate the outdoors in school programming. Learn more and register [here](#).

Event to Examine Evidence-Based Practice for Working with Young Children and Their Families

Sponsor: University of Minnesota Extension Center for Family Development (FD)

FD's Partnering for School Success program is now offering its "take and teach" lessons in Spanish. These lessons are designed to help volunteers and professional educators facilitate discussions and activities with parents on how to better support their children's education. The nine lessons cover setting expectations, providing structure, modeling a respect for learning, and more. Access the lessons [here](#).

Conference to Address Attachment Matters: Raising the Bar for Child Well-Being

Sponsor: Association for Training on Trauma and Attachment in Children

Dates: September 24 - 27, 2015

Location: Bloomington, MN

Save the date! Join [Stephen Porges, Ph.D.](#), Deborah Gray L.I.C.S.W., and [Jaak Panksepp, Ph.D.](#) for a conference addressing attachment and trauma through innovative workshop sessions. Read more [here](#). [link no longer active]

Podcast Features Dr. Dan Siegel on the 'Whole Brain Child'

Sponsor: Mom Enough website

UCLA clinical psychiatry professor and author [Dan Siegel, M.D.](#), joins [Marti Erickson, Ph.D.](#), founding director of CYFC, and her daughter, Erin Erickson, to discuss recent brain research that offers an effective and innovative framework for teaching parents and children how to nurture their developing minds. Dan, Marti, and Erin will talk about how children's brains work and how that can help parents and kids cope with frustration, disappointment and conflict. Listen to the conversation on the Mom Enough [website](#).

Job Opportunity

Senior Chemical Health and Family Program Coordinator — Minnesota Organization on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome

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